

IC 75-1397
15 April 1975

MEMORANDUM FOR: General Wilson

SUBJECT: Role of the NSCIC Working Group

1. In reviewing the minutes of the Working Group meetings and other related papers, I'm reminded of the man who says he doesn't know anything about art but knows what he likes when he sees it. With some exceptions--chiefly from Ober--the views expressed by the members are about what one would expect from any group of intelligent individuals called on to critique a process which they don't really understand and review a product which in general they are not familiar with. Their comments range from the highly specific (wording changes in the Objectives and KIQs) to the highly general (the need to better qualify uncertainties in estimates). But as a group they do not convey with any conviction or cohesiveness a "consumer" view of intelligence.

2. One impression that does come through strongly from the Working Group meetings is that intelligence could be improved if in some way consumers (i. e., the Working Group) could play a direct role in the intelligence community's management. In its most extreme form, this would have the Working Group draft, and the NSCIC issue, Objectives and KIQs (Ober's idea) and prior review by consumers of national estimates (Ellsworth). This kind of a role for NSCIC and its Working Group strikes me as highly inappropriate. The related concept that the NSCIC structure should act as a sort of IG over the intelligence community should also, in my view, be discouraged.

3. As alternatives, I would suggest two other modes of operation for the Working Group. The first would involve the preparation of studies (i. e., consumer views) on broad substantive intelligence areas. The following four come immediately to mind:

- a. Review of the current generation of national estimates.
- b. Review of the adequacy of current intelligence publications.
- c. Review of the adequacy of warning intelligence.
- d. Review of the DCI's family of guidance documents (Perspectives, Objectives, KIQs, DCID 1/2).

These studies would form the basis for NSC directives or guidance to the DCI, perhaps in a new art form--a National Security Intelligence Guidance Memorandum (NSIGM).

4. The foregoing process, designed to supplement the Presidential directive of November 1971 and provide periodic consumer guidance from the top down, should also be balanced by good and continuing communication between intelligence producers and consumers at the working level. This already exists to some extent through the NIOs and other media, but consumers clearly feel a need for more. I suggest, therefore, that the Working Group set up a producer/consumer subgroup to study and come up with recommendations on more effective consumer feedback to the production community. It is my thought that the Working Group might act as the focal point for whatever feedback systems are developed.

5. The study projects proposed above, with one exception, cover the same general subjects already on the Working Group's agenda of action projects. The perspective, however, is broader. For example, instead of having individual consumers critiquing their own pet KIQs, it is proposed that as a group (or subgroup) they look at the KIQs in toto and in the context of the DCI's other guidance documents and come up with a comprehensive consumer view of the adequacy of the whole package. Similarly, their individual critiques of specific NIEs should be broadened into a comprehensive critique of the estimative process.

6. All the foregoing is based on two assumptions, the validity of which seems to me to be in some doubt. One is that the DCI really

wants the kind of NSC guidance projected in paragraph 3, above. The other, that Working Group members will be able to obtain and distill consumer views that differ from or are more valid than consumer views conveyed to the intelligence community through USIB representatives of consumer agencies.

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Deputy Chief, PRD/IC

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P.S. With reference to paragraph 4 above, the RONI appears to be an excellent vehicle for channeling consumer feedback to the production community in an informal but systematic way.